

REMARKS

Summary Of The Office Action & Formalities

Claims 1-38 are all the claims pending in the application. By this Amendment, Applicant is canceling claim 2, amending claims 1, 3, 5, 7, 12, 14, and 26, and adding new claims 39-44. No new matter is added.

Submitted herewith are a Petition for Extension of Time with fee and an Excess Claim Fee Payment Letter with fee.

Applicant requests the Examiner to acknowledge the claims to foreign priority and to confirming that the certified copies of the priority documents were received in this application (JP Application No. 11-244333) and in the parent application (JP Application Nos. 10-034035 and 11-246213).

Applicant also thanks the Examiner for initialing the references listed on forms PTO-1449 submitted with the Information Disclosure Statements filed on August 31, 2000 and November 16, 2001.

The disclosure of the Summary of the Invention is objected to for reasons stated at page 2 of the Office Action. Applicant is amending the disclosure to overcome this objection.

The prior art rejections are summarized as follows:

1. Claims 1 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over EP 409 760 A1.

Claims 2-12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 14-38 are allowed.

Without agreeing to or substantively commenting on the grounds of rejection, Applicant is rewriting claims 2 (rewritten using claim 1), 5, and 7 in independent form, thereby placing these claims and claims dependent therefrom in condition for allowance.

Applicant is also making a minor amendment to claims 12, 14, and 26.

New Claims

For additional claim coverage merited by the scope of the invention, Applicant is adding new claims 39-44. Claim 39 is allowable at least by reason of its dependency. Claims 40-44 correspond to claims 1, 5, 7, 14, and 26, respectively, but do not recite elements in means-plus-function language.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No. 09/652,041

Attorney Docket No.: Q60649

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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